

Answered

Coltrup March 25. - 1775.

On G. S. 51

My Dear Sir

I have, to my shame, been reading over your two most obliging letters of the 12. of December, and 25. of Feb: both unanswered. Since the date of the first things have taken a new and most astonishing turn. I can form no guess at the Ministers' motive for proposing the conciliatory bills. Could it have been merely a trick played to the opposition, in order to force their concurrence by taking up their ground? This I can not suppose. To disunite the nation from such a motive would be base indeed! Could it be from information, that such terms would be acceptable to America. Then why do more than to pass the bills, without naming commissioners other than those already there, or upon their return, to send new commanders as soon as fill their places. But to send a man of the first rank, to make such humiliating proposals, and still more so if in the uncertainty of their being greedily accepted; is humiliation beyond humiliation.

In this state of my mind, comes the news of the French Ambassador's Declaration of the 14th Ct. the treaty signed at Versailles the 6. of Feb. with the independent States of America. And Nottles hopes

that still a war may be avoided by the Americans' refusal to ratify the French treaty! What exultation to this infant empire of America! The Kings of Great Britain and of France employing their friendship and alliance at once and the same time! I am convinced that these republicans are in the most desperate situation with respect to men, money, food, and raiment. I am also convinced that their misery and distress will be increased in consequence of a French alliance, drawing on a war by England against all the world who shall presume to trade with these rebellious subjects. This most chaste: Mr. hopes that this alliance will not interrupt the harmony subsisting between him and the R. of G. B. This bold: Mr. hopes that his general orders to stop and search every French ship upon the seas, in order to Disapparent the effects of this treaty will not interrupt the harmony between him and his M. C. M. This I think would be a proper answer. Shall we still send out our commissions? Shall we not repeat our late acts? we know the Americans what length we have been willing to go. Their treaty with France leaves us no room to except their acceptance of it. It is at their door to mark the next proposals. The honour of a nation is the

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last change to be given up; because when this is given up, nothing can be refused. And as Administration is not the nation, we have still an open door to retrieve it.

We expect this afternoon to know the result of the King's message of the 9. Upon this I shall form my opinion of what is to follow.

I know something of French invasions, and I know something of the sentiments of M. de Marceaux concerning them. There is not one man in Europe who forms so just an opinion of the power of G. B. by sea as the old minister, and as did (if I mistake not) the father of the present Ambassador (the late Marshal de Noailles) neither of these would have advised France to enter a war with G. B. for the sake of trade with America, a Devilish good work it must be, if it can repay the price. I may be mistaken no doubt; but I imagine that had we not had peace with France, the Americans never could have had the supplies which have reached them in spite of all our vigilance. The French say they have 120 ships of the line. If so they have been very busy. They had not 5. at the end of the last war. Thank God I am near 65 years old and am in such a situation as neither to have hopes or fears.

I send you enclosed a bill of lading for the box containing
your books and papers. Let me know if my French parcel be sent
off. My best respects to Mrs. Hamilton. James is gone to his regiment.
Mrs. Stewart remains with us, and, as Lady F. sends you and Mrs. Hamilton
many kind compliments. I am now my dearest

Yours most faithfully ever your
Jas. Stewart Duxbury

J. H.

J. H.

To Strickland Hamilton Esq

Annicka - Street Cavendish Square

London

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Ans. 23rd April.



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